**Best Practice Carousel: The Iceberg**

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I chose this as a best practice as many students, in their final evaluation of my teaching, found this initial activity a memorable one. I used it as an introduction on my first teaching day.  
  
With this practicum in a non-semestered school, I was looking for a quick way to establish a connection and learn more about each student. The image of the iceberg in social justice education is used as a way to talk about “visible” (individualized) and “invisibilized” (systemic) faces of oppression, the “visible” being the tip of the iceberg. I decided to use this image to explore the visible and invisible aspects of one's identity.   
  
First, I drew a large iceberg on the board, submerged almost entirely in water. I asked the students what it was, and what they noticed about it. Many pointed out that only the very tip of the iceberg is visible above the surface of the water, while 80% or so of it sits below the water. This is one way to understand the visible and invisible aspects of a person. Often, we see only the 10% above the surface of the water, and we draw conclusions based on this 10%. Without interacting with the person, we've already made assumptions.  
  
I then used the iceberg to introduce myself. I started with the "visible" aspects, for example, I wear glasses, I'm of East Asian ancestry, people assume I'm a woman, I'm short, I have asymmetrical hair, etc. I then discussed some of the conclusions that people have drawn about me based on these visible markers; for example, that I'm good at math, that I like rice, that I'm accommodating or quiet, etc. Finally I shared some of the "invisible" aspects of my identity--that I'm an eldest child, that I was born & raised in Little Portugal, that I’m actually bad at math, that I do love rice, that I’m loud when I want to be, and so on.    
  
I then asked students to create their own personal "iceberg" which consisted of five (5) "visible" aspects of themselves, and five "invisible" aspects of themselves. They then submitted their "Icebergs" to me for review. I gave them a completion mark for their submissions and, more importantly, responded to the information they shared of themselves in a (what I'd like to think of as) fun, conversational, and non-judgmental way. This facilitated relationship building and was a fun way to learn about the students' interests as well as about how they perceived themselves, and how they believed others perceived them.